

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

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SUBJ: CIVAIR: NORTHWEST AIRLINES AIR FARES

REF: (A) STATE 140340; (B) COPENHAGEN 3680; (C) STOCKHOLM 2217

1. NORTHWEST AIRLINES' REGIONAL MANAGER JAMES FOSTER INFORMED US JUNE 16 THAT NORTHWEST OFFICIALS HAD A "CORDIAL, CONSTRUCTIVE MEETING" IN STOCKHOLM JUNE 13 WITH SWEDISH AND DANISH CIVIL AVIATION OFFICIALS.

2. DISCUSSION CENTERED ON THE NINE CONDITIONS FORMULATED BY SAS (SEE PARA 1 OF REF A). NORTHWEST, FOSTER SAID, ACCEPTED ALL BUT TWO OF THEM: POINT 3, THAT LIMITS APPLICABILITY TO NEW YORK, AND POINT 4, WHICH CALLS FOR AN INCREASE IN THE BARGAIN FARE UP TO \$35 TO PUT IT ON A LEVEL WITH THE LOWEST APPROVED FARE FROM FRANKFURT. NORTHWEST INTENDS TO REFILE, ADJUSTING PREVIOUS FILING TO ACCOMMODATE ACCEPTANCE OF THE SEVEN POINTS. THE COMPANY IS DOING THIS, FOSTER SAID, IN ORDER TO BRING THE DISCUSSION DOWN TO THE TWO REALLY IM-
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PORTANT ISSUES; I.E., POINTS 3 AND 4. IF THE DANES AND SWEDES SHOULD TURN DOWN NORTHWEST BECAUSE OF THESE TWO POINTS, FOSTER BELIEVES THAT THE MATTER WOULD THEN BECOME ONE FOR GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT DISCUSSION.

3. FOSTER SAID THAT NORTHWEST CONSIDERS THAT IT

CANNOT "POLITICALLY" JUSTIFY LIMITING APPLICABILITY OF THE BARGAIN FARE TO NEW YORK INASMUCH AS IT INTENDS TO FLY FROM BOSTON AND OTHER PLACES AS WELL. AS FOR INCREASING THE BUDGET FARE \$35, FOSTER SAID THAT THAT WOULD SMACK OF PRICE FIXING, SOMETHING THE COMPANY WISHES TO AVOID. FURTHERMORE, THE COMPANY BELIEVES THAT PRICES SHOULD BE DETERMINED ON THE BASIS OF MARKET CONDITIONS IN SCANDINAVIA AND SHOULD NOT BE RELATED TO FRANKFURT OR ZURICH, PLACES IN WHICH NORTHWEST WILL NOT OPERATE.

4. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH FOSTER DESCRIBED THE JUNE 13 MEETING AS CORDIAL AND CONSTRUCTIVE, HE SEEMED LESS CERTAIN THAN BEFORE THAT THE SCANDINAVIAN AUTHORITIES WOULD ACCEPT NORTHWEST'S BARGAIN FARE. WE WOULD BE SOMEWHAT SURPRISED, HOWEVER, IF THEY DO NOT. RECENT NEWSPAPER REPORTS HAVE INDICATED THAT SAS HAS SOFTENED ITS POSITION ON LOW COST PRICES TO THE UK AND ACROSS THE ATLANTIC. WHILE THESE REPORTS HAVE NOT BEEN CONFIRMED, NEITHER HAVE THEY BEEN DENIED.

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